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ABSTRACT

The booklet is designed for teachers who feel a need for background or additional information about career education. In a question and answer format, 20 concerns of career education are briefly discussed. These pertain to curriculum, level of career preparation, the concept of life-long education, the role of industry, and the objectives of career education. Two other booklets of a similarly informative nature are available: "Why Career Education in Arizona?" (CE 001 166) and "Arizona Career Education--What Is It?" (CE 001 167). (AG)

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Questions & Answers About

Career Education

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the 3R's plus

ARIZONA CAREER EDUCATION CLEARINGHOUSE

ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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CE 001 165

PREFACE

This booklet is designed for teachers who feel a need for background or additional information about Career Education. Some of the more frequently cited questions and answers about Career Education are presented.

Acknowledgment must be given to Cleo Boswell, Pinal County Career Education Project; Carol Barrow, Mohave County Career Education Project; Goldye Hart, Roosevelt Career Education Project; Larry Frase, Mesa Center for Career Development; Sue Cook, Central Maricopa Career Education Project; and Leon Webb, Project: Career Bound for their critical review of the manuscript prior to its final review and publication.

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Arizona State Department of Education

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT CAREER EDUCATION

If you have been associated with any phase of education in the State of Arizona within the past few years, you have heard the term "Career Education" many times. Perhaps, however, you are not clear as to what it is, why it is seemingly exploding all over Arizona and the nation, and how it affects you as a teacher and what you do in your classroom.

You might ask:

Q. Does Career Education mean another subject will be added to my already overcrowded curriculum?

A. No! Career Education should not be a separate subject. It should be integrated into the already existing curriculum. The intent is one of re-focusing; that is, concentrating on people, and how skills and knowledges already being taught relate to how people occupy their time (both leisure time and work time). It means making even more use of community resources–people, places, and things–to bring occupational information into the reach of interested students. It means looking more closely at who students are, what they are, and where they are going. It means looking for ways to develop such factors as decision-making skills, responsible behavior, positive attitudes toward the dignity of all work, clarification of values and appreciations, and self awareness.

Q. Does Career Education mean we will start preparing students for a specific career in kindergarten?

A. No. Career Education is a developmental process that *begins* in kindergarten. The students at this level concentrate on a general awareness of the dignity of all work and the development of positive self concepts.

Q. Does Career Education mean we will no longer be emphasizing the basic academic courses such as reading, writing, computation, social studies and others?

A. No. Career Education does not in any way mean to lessen the importance of the basic academic subjects. It does, however, endeavor to enhance the 3 R's by making them more student oriented and realistic by relating them to the world outside of school.

Q. Does Career Education mean that people will never finish their education?

A. Yes, but this isn't new. Career Education recognizes that individuals in today's world must be open to continuing education in order to remain adaptable to changes in their lives. For educational institutions, this means an open-entry open-exit policy should be in effect to accept people regardless of age or educational background. Programs must be available that will allow people to take advantage of opportunities by acquiring new knowledges and skills or to update their present abilities.

Q. Does Career Education mean to take the education of students out of our hands and put it into the hands of non-degreed persons?

A. No. Career Education simply recognizes that education today is a task that is too great and too important to be left to a group of persons who are rapidly becoming overloaded not only with work and responsibilities but with the information explosions. Career Education also recognizes that regular classroom teachers can call on resource people who have the skills and knowledges needed to satisfy specific needs of students.

Q. I keep hearing that Career Education is just a new fad. Is this true?

A. Hardly. If you will reflect over the history of education with the goals of Career Education in mind, you will realize that Career Education has permeated education in the United States from the beginning of the Benjamin Franklin Academy.

Q. What effect will Career Education have on the social and economic problems?

A. Career Education does not propose to be a panacea for all the ills of society. It does, however, hope to alleviate them by eliminating some of the educational, social, cultural and personal problems.

Q. So many young people today seem to regard work as being beneath them or at least to have many negative connotations. Does Career Education plan to do anything about this?

A. Very definitely. As you learn more about what Career Education is, you will discover that from kindergarten on, there is an emphasis on developing positive attitudes toward work, toward workers of all kinds as being significant, and toward the interdependence of all kinds of work. The hope is to eliminate the categorizing of some kinds of work as being degrading and others being status-laden.

Q. I teach in the education department of a college and find it difficult to relate to Career Education as a legitimate subject. Do you have any suggestions?

A. First of all, Career Education cannot be defined as a subject. It is much broader and more inclusive. Secondly, many people have made judgments against Career Education without really trying to delve into it in depth. There are two sources of recommended information. The first will present you with some writings of a number of educators who have been actively involved with this educational re-focusing. The second is a collection of writings by educators which gives an overview of progressive education. Read the one on Career Education first, then read the one on progressive education and you will have answered your own question.

1. Keith Goldhammer and Robert E. Taylor, *Career Education Perspective and Promise*, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1972.

2. James R. Squire, Editor, *A New Look At Progressive Education*, Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1972.

Q. Why is it necessary for school youngsters to learn about careers and occupations so early in life? We didn't study it when I was in school.

A. Look at some of the young people just out of high school, those who are freshmen and sophomores in college, those you know who are juniors and seniors now in high school. Do they know where they are headed? Do they know why they are where they are? Do they feel their past years in school have really helped them make decisions and choices that were right for them? How many adults do you know who are unhappy in their jobs because now they realize they really want something else but feel it's too late to take the necessary schooling and training? How many adults made their choice of a career on the basis of a sound knowledge of themselves? How many people get out of school and years later say, "I wish I only knew then what I know now. It would have really made a difference!"

Q. Why should school begin concentrating on careers just when the work week is shortening and the leisure time is increasing?

A. Career Education encompasses far more than just studying careers. Career education includes preparation for avocations as well as occupations. It recognizes that all education is important for the development of citizens who are not only self-supporting but responsible to their family, community, country, society, and themselves. A very important part of Career Education deals with helping students understand themselves as individuals and as participating members of various groups.

Q. I am a member of a minority group and I think this Career Education idea is just another way to pigeon-hole me into a slot.

A. Career Education will open doors to opportunities perhaps never before open to you. Career Education means you will be making the decision about your future rather than having someone else make the decision for you. Through Career Education, you will study the vast occupational options that are available and will become more aware of your own interests, abilities and aptitudes. You can then match the options with what you learn about yourself. This will afford you a much better base upon which to make career decisions.

Q. As a school administrator, I can see where providing skill preparation in a number of fields could be far more expensive than our school budget could handle.

A. The career preparation phase of Career Education means yet another decision that must take into consideration priorities and compromises. Have you taken a community needs assessment and resource assessment recently? This might help you direct your career preparation program based on the needs of the community coupled with data from follow-up studies of your students. This would permit you to design a program that would be most viable for your particular school. Perhaps there are businesses within the community who would be willing to assist in the skills preparation phase of your program. Perhaps there is a school nearby that would accept some of your students into their specialized programs if you would accept some of theirs into your programs. Perhaps adjacent school districts could pool monies in equipping mobile resource units. In passing ARS-15-1199, the legislature encouraged multi-district cooperation.

Q. I just read some statistics indicating that by 1975 less than five percent of the occupations will be available to unskilled labor. By 1980, it is predicted that 80 percent of the occupations will require skills that do not need a college degree. The statistics also indicate that by the year 2000 approximately two-thirds of today's kindergarten children will be in occupations that are not even in existence today. Does this not present a strong argument for Career Education?

A. Definitely. That is why Career Education seeks to help our youth set realistic goals, not only in relation to their awareness of self and their choice of life style, but also based on trends in the world of work. It is also one of the reasons why Career Education stresses the fact that education is a continuing, life-long process.

Q. When I was a girl in school, the only career options offered were nursing, home economics, secretarial and teaching. I have been gratified to see that today more high school girls are venturing into areas that were closed to me. Will Career Education open more career options to women?

A. Hopefully, yes. It will take a lot of concentrated effort on the part of teachers, students, parents, administrators, counselors, and the community to change their attitudes of sex role stereotyping (which by the way is pretty well ingrained by the age of three). For example, there is really no sound rationale for assuming that a woman can't be an auto mechanic and feminine at the same time. There is no evidence to support the contention that male scientists are more intelligent and creative than women scientists.

Q. Some of the businessmen in my community want to know what they can do to help schools alleviate some of the problems employees are exhibiting on the job. They are concerned at the apparent lack of some very basic academic skills on the part of many of the young people they hire. They indicate that many of the employees exhibit little initiative, have trouble getting along with their fellow workers, and have little concept of teamwork. They complain that their employees are undependable and seem to assume that Mondays and/or Fridays are unspoken holidays. How can they help?

A. A few of the items you mention are definitely in the realm of the school while others are also the responsibility of parents, businesses, and the school all working together. Many of the items you mention are in the area of attitudes, values, and appreciations. Career Education seeks to address each of them. The businessmen in your community could help by taking an active role on school advisory councils. The businesses could open their doors to work experience and cooperative education programs. They could provide sites for work exposure and field trips. Resource speakers could let students know some of the problems and help students understand how they could affect them and the business for which they might be working.

Q. I want to do something in Career Education in my classroom. How do I go about it?

A. First, make sure you understand what Career Education is and what its goals are. Then, look at what you are already doing. You will undoubtedly find that you are presently doing quite a lot in the way of Career Education. Maybe by simply pointing up a few things within a unit you will be able to infuse Career Education

into it. For example, in mathematics if you are studying subtraction, you could use the idea of making change and study who does that in the world of work (the store clerk, the grocery cashier, the movie cashier, the merry-go-round vendor, etc.) In social studies if you are studying the history of the State, why not look at some of the occupations people had then and compare with those of today? You may be reading a novel in English. What are the personality characteristics, values, attitudes, etc. of the various characters? Within any subject area, lead the students to consider an occupation which would make the particular unit experience meaningful. Talk with other teachers. Check with your Career Education consultants. Come to the Arizona Career Education Clearinghouse on the third floor of the Education Building, 1535 W. Jefferson, Phoenix.

Q. My current textbooks and materials do not mention Career Education or provide exercises for it. What should I do?

A. There is a great deal of printed materials available that is either inexpensive or free. The real world can be used as a resource–field trips, guest speakers, work exposure, work experience, independent study project materials, interviewing. There are other teachers within your school or within your system. There are former students. There are parents. There are the students themselves. There is you. There is the Arizona Career Education Clearinghouse.

Q. I have heard that a lot of Career Education deals with developing positive attitudes. Isn't that area difficult to measure?

A. More difficult than the skills area, but not impossible. A great deal of research has been done in recent years in this area. Get together with your school or district counselor and let that person work with you in developing units and activities in this area.

Q. I am a music teacher and do not feel competent to teach about the world of work since I have never had any work experiences outside of the school except for playing in a band for short periods of time.

A. You are already aware of many of the opportunities available to musicians. Make a list of these job opportunities and, if necessary, do a little research into those areas with which you are less familiar. Design a couple of bulletin board ideas on careers in music. Perhaps you could take a few days to use what you have been teaching to obtain a job that will allow you to observe the musical needs and demands of the public. Remember, Career Education is also concerned with leisure time activities, and music appreciation is high on the list of such endeavors.

Some of the underlying reasons for Career Education in Arizona are given in *Why Career Education In Arizona?* It is available from your local Career Education project director or through the Arizona Career Education Clearinghouse located in the State Department of Education, 1535 W. Jefferson, Phoenix, AZ 85007.

For a review of Career Education, one source would be *Arizona Career Education–What Is It?* also available from your Career Education project director or through the Arizona Career Education Clearinghouse.

Self-Awareness And Career Education which gives you some ideas for integrating self-awareness into your students' learning, is also available from your project director or the Career Education Clearinghouse.

For some ideas on your role in relation to Career Education ask for *Career Education And You–The Teacher* available from the same sources as above.